sion on the "better life,[57] and therefore so unassuming, so secretly scornful, so proudly patient!—This Christianity, as the evening chime of *ft& good* antiquity, with cracked, weary and yet melodious bell, Is balm in the ears even to one who only now traverses those centuries historically. What must it have been to those men themselves !—To young and fresh barbarian nations, on the other hand, Christianity is a poison. For to implant the teaching of sinfulness and damnation in the heroic, childlike, and animal soul of the old Germans is nothing but poisoning. An enormous chemical fermentation and decomposition, a medley of sentiments and judgments, a rank growth of adventurous legend, and hence in the long run a fundamental weakening of such barbarian peoples, was the inevitable result. True, without this weakening what should we have left of Greek culture, of the whole cultured past of the human race ? For the barbarians untouched by Christianity knew very well how to make a clean sweep of old cultures, as was only too clearly shown by the heathen conquerors of Romanised Britain. Thus Christianity, against its will, was compelled to aid in making "the antique world" immortal.—There remains, however, a counter-question and the possibility of a counter-reckoning. Without this weakening through the poisoning referred to, would any of those fresh stocks—the Germans, for instance—have been in a position gradually to find by themselves a higher, a peculiar, a new culture, of which the most distant conception would therefore have been lost to humanity?—In this, as in every case, we do not know, Christianly speaking, whether God owes the